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FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 1899.

CONTENTS:

The United States Naval Observatory: PROFESSOR A. N. SKINNER 1
The Psychology of Society: PROFESSOR FRANKLIN H. GIDDINGS 16
Atomic Weights: DR. FERDINAND G. WIECHMANN 23
John Cummings: PROFESSOR WM. H. NILES 24
Scientific Books:—
  Holman on Matter, Energy, Force and Work: T. C. M. *Congdon's Qualitative Analysis; Muter's Manual of Analytical Chemistry:* PROFESSOR W. A. NOYES. *Thompson's Wild Animals I have known:* T. S. P. *Morris's Human Anatomy:* PROFESSOR THOMAS DWIGHT. *General* 24
Scientific Journals and Articles: 29
Societies and Academies:—
  The Nebraska Academy of Sciences; Science Club of Northwestern University: PROFESSOR W. A. LOCY. *The Chemical Society of Washington:* WILLIAM A. KRUG. *Students' Geological Club and Conference of Harvard University:* J. M. BOUTWELL. *Torrey Botanical Club:* E. S. BURGESS 29
Discussion and Correspondence:—
  The Pumas of the Western United States: WITMER STONE. *The Schmidt-Dickert Moon Model:* OLIVER C. FARRINGTON. *Lehmann and Hansen on 'the Telepathic Problem':* PROFESSOR E. B. TITCHENER 34
Astronomical Notes:—
The November Meteors; Chase's Comet (J. 1898); Stellar Motions: PROFESSOR WINSLOW UPTON... 36
Current Notes on Anthropology:—
  The American Hero-Myth; The Primitive Savage; A Booklet on Ethnology: PROFESSOR D. G. BRINTON 37
Scientific Notes and News 38
University and Educational News 40

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THE UNITED STATES NAVAL OBSERVATORY.

ALTHOUGH much interest was shown by individuals in the science of astronomy in the early history of our country, this interest did not culminate in the founding of any astronomical observatories until the third and fourth decades of the present century. About 1835 Professors Olmsted and Loomis observed Halley's comet with a five-inch telescope placed in the steeple of one of the buildings of Yale College at New Haven, Connecticut, but the observatory erected by Professor Albert Hopkins of Williams College, in 1836, was probably the earliest establishment of the kind in the United States. It was 48 feet long by 20 in breadth, and consisted of a central apartment surmounted by a revolving dome and flanked by two wings. The dome contained an equatorially mounted Herschelian telescope of 10-feet focus, and a 3.5-inch transit instrument was set up in one of the wings. Only two years later Professor Loomis built a small observatory at Hudson, Ohio, and furnished it with a 4-inch equatorial telescope and a 2.7-inch transit circle. The longitude and latitude of this observatory was determined by Professor Loomis, and he observed five comets and sixteen occultations in the brief intervals of leisure left from his regular class work in the Western Reserve College. Another indication of the zeal of individuals in the advancement of science by actual astro-